

In the claims:

Kindly cancel claims 7 and 17 without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter thereof.

Kindly rewrite the claims as follows:

1. (Amended) A method for detecting the presence of a target nucleic acid sequence in a sample, said method comprising:

Q1 (a) amplifying said target nucleic acid and introducing a purine rich region into the target sequence during the amplification reaction so that the product of the amplification reaction includes a purine rich region;

(b) contacting the sample with a peptide nucleic acid able to bind at least a portion of said target sequence; and

(c) detecting the presence of triplex structures,  
wherein the detection of the presence of triplex structures indicates the presence of target nucleic acid sequences in the sample.

6. (Amended) A method for detecting the presence of a target nucleic acid sequence in a sample, said method comprising:

Q8 (a) providing a target nucleic acid that contains a purine rich region;  
(b) amplifying said target nucleic acid so that the product of the amplification reaction includes the purine rich region;

(c) contacting the sample with a peptide nucleic acid able to bind at least a portion of said target sequence; and

(d) detecting the presence of triplex structures,  
wherein the detection of the presence of triplex structures indicates the presence of target nucleic acid sequences in the sample.

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Q9 8. (Amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein primers used in the amplification comprise a plurality of pyrimidines at the 5' end thereof.

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Q10 13. (Amended) A primer, comprising a sequence which hybridizes to an end region of a target nucleic acid sequence, and a plurality of pyrimidine residues at a 5' region thereof, wherein the primer is adapted to introduce a purine rich region into an amplification product so that the product of the amplification reaction includes a purine rich region.

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